Nursery Schools

REGULATIONS, DATED 24TH MARCH, 1948, MADE BY THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION UNDER THE EDUCATION ACT (NORTHERN IRELAND), 1947, WITH THE APPROVAL OF THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE.

1948. No. 97

The Ministry of Education in pursuance of the powers vested in it by Sections 83, 104 and 112 of the Education Act (Northern Ireland), 1947, and of all other powers enabling it in that behalf, and with the approval of the Ministry of Finance, hereby makes the following Regulations :—

Introductory

1.—(1) These Regulations may be cited as the Nursery Schools Regulations (Northern Ireland), 1948.

(2) These Regulations shall come into operation on the first day of April, 1948.

2.—(1) In these Regulations, unless the context otherwise requires, the following expressions have the meanings hereby assigned to them, that is to say :—

" approved " means approved by the Ministry ;

" average daily enrolment " has the meaning assigned to it by the Regulations for the time being in force applicable to primary schools ;

" nursery school " means a primary school used mainly for the purpose of providing education for children who have attained the age of two years but have not attained the age of five years ;

" school day " does not include a Saturday or a Sunday ;

" school year " means a period of twelve months ending on the 31st July ;

" teacher " does not include a nursery assistant ;

" voluntary nursery school " means a nursery school under the control and management of a person or body of persons other than a local education authority.

(2) The Interpretation Act, 1921, (12 Geo. 5. c. 4) applies for the purpose of the interpretation of these Regulations as it applies for the purpose of the interpretation of an Act of the Parliament of Northern Ireland.

3. These Regulations prescribe the conditions, whether general or special, which shall be satisfied by any nursery school in order that grant may be payable in respect thereof under Section 104 of the Act.

Special conditions applicable to Voluntary Nursery Schools

4.—(1) Each voluntary nursery school shall be under the control and management of a person approved by the Ministry, or of a body of persons (hereinafter referred to as "the Committee"), appointed in accordance with an approved scheme.

(2) Any such scheme shall set forth the constitution and define the functions of the Committee, and the Committee shall act in accordance with the scheme.

(3) A copy of the scheme shall be deposited with the Ministry and no variation of, or departure from, its provisions shall be made without the approval of the Ministry.

5.—(1) A voluntary nursery school shall not be conducted for private profit nor shall it be farmed out to any person.

(2) The income of the school from all sources shall be devoted to the use of the school.

(3) A statement of the accounts of the school for each school year shall be furnished to the Ministry at such date and in such form as the Ministry may direct, and such statement shall be supported by such vouchers and other evidence as the Ministry may require.

General conditions

6.—(1) In order to be recognised a nursery school shall comply with the requirements imposed on it by or under the Act.

(2) Recognition of a new nursery school will be dependent upon the Ministry being satisfied that not less than twenty children between the ages of two years and five years will be enrolled in the school. The continued recognition of a nursery school will be dependent upon the maintenance of such average daily enrolment of pupils as the Ministry may determine.

7. Each nursery school shall be conducted on approved lines and kept on a satisfactory level of efficiency, and shall be open to inspection by officers of the Ministry.

8.—(1) Without prejudice to the general requirements of Regulation 6 the premises of a nursery school shall be safe in case of fire, kept in a proper state of repair and cleanliness, suitably arranged, furnished and equipped, and provided with indoor and outdoor facilities for the recreation of the pupils.

(2) Proposals to provide new premises for a nursery school or to alter its existing premises, and estimates of the cost thereof, shall be subject to the approval of the Ministry.

9.—(1) A pupil shall not be refused admission to, or excluded from, a nursery school on other than reasonable grounds.

(2) Except with the approval of the Ministry, a pupil shall not be admitted to a nursery school under the age of two years or retained after he has attained the age of five years.

(3) The arrangements made for the admission of pupils shall provide that not more than five pupils under the age of three years shall be included in a class of twenty-five unless the Ministry is satisfied that the circumstances are such as would justify the inclusion of a larger number.

10.—(1) In each nursery school training and activities suitable to the ages of the pupils shall be provided, and a time-table shall be exhibited showing how the day will be spent.

(2) The school shall be open for at least four hours each school day and not less than three hours shall be spent in suitable training and activities.

11.—(1) A nursery school shall be open for not less than two hundred school days in each school year :

Provided that, in exceptional circumstances, the Ministry may approve a lesser number of days of opening.

(2) If in any school year a nursery school is not in operation for at least the number of days required by paragraph (1) of this Regulation the Ministry may withhold, or make a deduction from, any grant payable in respect of the school under these Regulations.

12. The attendance of the pupils shall be recorded in registers approved for the purpose in accordance with instructions issued from time to time by the Ministry.

13.—(1) A nursery school shall not, without the approval of the Ministry, be conducted other than as a single unit school for twenty-five pupils or as a two-unit school for fifty pupils divided into two classes of twenty-five pupils each.

(2) The maximum number of pupils who may be enrolled in a single unit school shall not exceed twenty-eight, and in a two-unit school shall not exceed fifty-six.

14.—(1) For each single unit nursery school there shall be a superintendent teacher and a nursery assistant and for each two-unit nursery school there shall be a superintendent teacher, an assistant teacher and two nursery assistants.

(2) Where a nursery school —

(*a*) makes provision mainly for the children of women engaged in industry and the normal hours of opening are exceeded ; or

(*b*) with the approval of the Ministry, makes provision for more than twenty-five, but less than fifty pupils ;